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Class 1

Book 1

THE BALLOT AND THE BULLET.

HOW TO SAVE THE NATION.

A D D R E S S

OF

HENRY STANBERY, ESQ.

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ADDRESS

OF

HENRY STANBERY, Esq.

THE WAR AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

FELLOW CITIZENS: I have said more than once since the commencement of this rebellion, that it was a fortunate thing, since it was to begin, that it did begin when a Presidential election was as remote as possible. I had seen too much of our Presidential contest not to dread the fierce party strifes which they engender. The great work, then, before the nation, required our undivided attention. The great issue then presented was, whether we could save the nation. Save it first, and administer it afterward, seemed to me the dictate of wisdom. Finish the contest with the rebels, and then begin, if you please, the other contest for the spoil, of victory.

So, for nearly four years, the contest for the preservation of the Nation has gone on; but it is not ended, and at last, a Presidential election has come in like a disturbing force before the good work is quite finished. In this particular the rebels are more fortunate. In anticipation of the contest before them, they said no Presidential election should disturb them for six years, and the consequence is, that the same fixed will, the same experienced leader that has carried on their affairs from the beginning, still holds the reins. And so, unlike ourselves, they are free from a party contest of their own, and quite at liberty to take a hand in this party contest of ours. Does any one need to ask on which side? [No, no.]

It is true they can't vote. If, throughout what is left of the Southern Confederacy, they should regularly choose electors for President at the very time and manner fixed in our Constitution, I hardly think their votes would be received. No party at the North has, as yet, gone quite to that length in favor of free elections. No one has, as yet, admitted the vote of a rebel in arms. But if the rebel has no arms in his hands, though out and out disloyal, he may, according to some, do anything, write anything, counsel anything, utter anything, in favor of the rebellion, and yet he is a good voter and perfectly entitled to the free ballot!

But let us suppose that rebels in arms were allowed to vote. What State in the Confederacy would vote for Abraham Lincoln? What State in the Confederacy would not rather vote for George B. McClellan? Which do you think would stand in that region the best chance for the Vice Presidency, Johnson or Pendleton? If you were called upon to stake your money upon such an election, would you hesitate? No, my friends, you would give ten to one upon McClellan against Lincoln, or any odds on Pendleton against the field.

Let us put it another way. Who would Davis vote for? Consider that, men of the North. Of these two men now presented to your choice, if Davis had a

vote, which of them would get it? You wish to vote for the man most likely to put down the rebellion. Davis, on the contrary, would cast his vote for the man least likely to do it. I am not a betting man; if I were, I would give any odds that the Arch traitor would vote for McClellan.

There is an ancient maxim, that it is wise to learn from our foes. If they prefer McClellan, we can have no stronger reason for preferring Lincoln. There is another thing which we are taught by this rebel preference for the Chicago nominee, and that is, that Lincoln is considered by the South the most formidable antagonist of the two. McClellan's friends tell us that he, too, goes for the prosecution of the war; and that he is as good a Union man as Lincoln. That may be so, but the rebels are not just of that opinion. [Laughter.] If fighting is to be the order of the day, they would rather fight McClellan than Lincoln. They have tried them both, and they prefer McClellan as an antagonist.

It was said at Chicago that the war had been a failure under the auspices of Lincoln, and therefore they present a distinguished General to take his place. But how does it happen that the rebels are equally anxious to get rid of Lincoln? Do they find fault with him because he has failed to whip them? Do they want to change him for McClellan because McClellan will fight them more successfully? Do they, think you, wish to change an antagonist whose blows are feeble and easily warded, for one who has more skill and will strike harder?

THE CANDIDATES BEFORE THE PEOPLE.

Now, my friends, let us examine these opposing candidates and their platforms for ourselves. And first let us take cognizance of the new men—those who are brought forward as better men for the great business in hand than those now in place. A General and a member of Congress—both gentlemen of intelligence and respectability—but neither of them at all likely to have been thought of as candidates except to represent particular ideas. Therefore, one is to represent the War Democrats, the other the Peace Democrats; and yet they must stand on the same platform, and seem to represent a united party.

On the eastern portico of the Capitol at Washington stands two colossal statues. One represents War, with sword in hand, the other Peace, holding the olive branch. Weld these statues together, back to back, and you have the effigies of McClellan and Pendleton.

Look now at our Union candidates: Lincoln and Johnson are of one mind; each equally intent upon one great purpose, and that is to put down this rebellion in the only way in which it ever can be put down, and that is by force of arms. If Lincoln should die before the contest is ended, there is Johnson to take his place and carry out the same policy; but if McClellan should die and Pendleton take his place, then what are we to expect? Then this Janus-faced statue is turned around; then the sword is cast aside, and then comes a change of policy, with "*not another man or another dollar.*"

Let the War Democrats, whose faith is fixed on McClellan, not forget the risk which is run that his vote may place our destinies in the hands of Pendleton.

My friends, I did not vote for Lincoln. I have never seen him; but from the 4th of March, 1861, to the present time, I have watched him closely. He has said some things which I do not approve. He has done some things which did not suit me; but for all that, I prefer him to any new and untried man. All my wishes, all my hopes, are centered in one thing, and that is the crushing out of this rebellion by force of arms. There is no other way to save the Republic. Whatever else may be said of Mr. Lincoln, no one can doubt that he has the same purpose, and that from first to last he has never faltered in the good work.

My friends, I do not wish to change our President or his Cabinet, or our Generals in the field. Lincoln suits me; so does Seward and Stanton, and Fessenden and Wells, and Grant and Sherman, and Sheridan and Winslow, and Porter and Farragut.

CABINET OFFICERS AND GENERALS.

It was a long time and after many changes before we got the right man in the right place. Where will you find a new Secretary who will keep our relations

with other nations—a matter of the greatest moment—in better trim than Seward? Many find fault with Stanton. They say he is rude and overbearing, but who questions his honesty or ability? Look at our vast armies. Raised, equipped, transported over great distances—every soldier to be provided every day with his punctual rations—and consider the vast and multiplied agencies which must be provided. It is Stanton who presides over all this machinery, and he works it well. Vast as his duties are, he neglects nothing. There he is, always at his post, earnest and indefatigable.

My friends, if you turn out Lincoln, you turn out Seward and Stanton, and all the other members of the Cabinet. Can any one assure you that Grant and Sherman will not go also? I very much fear there would be a clean sweep not only in the cabinet but in the field. There is more than one disaffected Major-General, who has been retired like McClellan, who would be sure to be restored. What further? A clean sweep of all other civil officers, from our foreign ministers down. This rule fully established, first introduced by a Democratic Administration, and never since omitted. We complain of fraud and speculation in our officers, but how shall we stand a new and hungry swarm?

CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION FATAL.

There is another most weighty consideration against such a change, and it is this: If in November next it should happen that the people displace the present Administration, what would be the result? That Administration would be paralyzed. Set aside by the people—their services ignored—their policy condemned, they would lose heart and confidence in themselves, and they would lose the confidence and support of the country. What capitalist would lend another dollar—what soldier would risk his life in another battle, for a people who condemn or seem to condemn this war? An outgoing Administration whose policy has been condemned, is powerless, and so from November to March, nothing would be done. Precious time lost, perhaps never to be regained. Have you forgotten the fatal delays of the outgoing Administration of Buchanan, when for months the rebels were “let alone?” The country never was in such peril as in that six months. Our escape was providential.

My friends, in view of such obvious results, what true lover of the Union will consent to make a change now? Is there any man so wedded to his party as to forget what he owes to his country? Alas! there are many, many true Union men, who have a personal preference for a Democratic candidate, and many others who have a personal dislike to Lincoln. We call this class War Democrats. They incline to follow their party instincts and their personal feelings.

PERSONAL PREJUDICES OR PREFERENCES.

For myself, I have lost sight of all party ideas since this war broke out. In November, 1860, no persuasion could induce me to vote for Lincoln. In November, 1864, if I live to cast a vote, it shall be for him. Not vote for him because he did not belong to my party in 1860! Not vote for him because our political creeds do not coincide! We agree in the great business now in hand, and that is enough for me.

“Shall I ask the brave soldier who fights by my side,
In the cause of mankind, if our creeds agree?”

Nay, nay, my friends, no one can persuade me to vote Lincoln out. I am thoroughly satisfied of the fatal policy of change; so thoroughly, that Lincoln himself could not by any personal wrong or indignity he might inflict on me, prevent that vote. [Cheers.] I pretend to no Roman virtue, and yet, if to-night I should be arrested, denied the habeas corpus, imprisoned in Lafayette and released in time to vote in November, it would be my duty to vote for Lincoln. [Cheers.] I should not be justified in weighing my individual griefs against the paramount duty to my country.

VIOLATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION.

Some ardent lover of the rights of the citizen might ask me:

"How is it, Mr. Stanbery, that you, an old lawyer, can vote for a man that has violated the Constitution of his country?"

I would answer: "It is a great wrong if he has violated that Constitution, but it seems quite clear to me, that while he may have been careless of the Constitution, *he has been very careful of the nation.* If he has tried to destroy the one, he has tried to save the other. *If he has torn the garment, HE HAS TAKEN PRECIOUS CARE OF THE BODY, and is not the body better than the raiment?*"

Mind you, fellow-citizens, I do not admit that Mr. Lincoln has violated our Constitution. I do not admit that these arrests, in time of war, are forbidden by the Constitution. I do not object to Mr. Lincoln on that account, nor yet to Mr. McClellan on the same ground. Nay, on the contrary, there is no act of General McClellan's that I so cordially approve as his wholesale arrest of that Maryland Legislature. If he had been as prompt and successful in putting down the whole rebellion as he was in putting down that branch of it, we would have had peace long ago. Who can tell how much precious blood has been saved by that timely act? What would be the condition of Maryland now, if that convention of traitors had carried her into the Southern Confederacy? But for those arrests, we should have witnessed all over Maryland such scenes as those in Baltimore, when the loyal soldiers of the Republic were murdered by a mob. Was that a time for the Sheriff and his *posse*? Was that a time for the *habeas corpus* and trial by jury? All was terror and confusion, and the whole nation hailed Butler and his soldiers as deliverers.

When a nation is in a state of war, no matter what may be its form of Government, it is the executive power, whether lodged in a King or President, that is called into action. The Legislature and the Judiciary do not do the fighting. We do not carry on war by statutes, debates, or judicial decisions. War requires action, and a guiding will ready on the instant for any emergency. If you look into our frame of Government, you will see that it is on the President that the power and responsibility are cast to carry on the war. He cannot declare war or make peace. It requires the intervention of Congress to begin it or end it—but whilst it exists, it is the President who must act. He commands our armies and navies, and he directs their movements. Without his authority nothing can be done.

Now, my friends, this nation is not only engaged in war, but in a war against the rebellion. It is a war waged by us for self-preservation. It is not the common form of a rebellion which aims only to change the dominant power while the nation is preserved, but its aim is to destroy the nationality. Alas! what blood, what treasure, what sorrow, what lamentation have followed that crime against humanity, civilization and civil liberty, which was committed in Charleston harbor on the 13th of April, 1861. It could have been committed nowhere else throughout the South but just there. The mortal instruments could have been found nowhere else. Those disaffected spirits had been trained and prepared for it long before. Twenty-eight years before, they had, under the pretense of an unconstitutional tariff, passed an ordinance of secession in the very words of their ordinance of December, 1860. What, then, saved the country? It was a President. It was Executive power in hands that would have wielded it with terrible retribution. Think you that Jackson would have hesitated about arrests if those traitors had fired upon our flag? No, my friends: he would have seized them all with a grasp of iron, and instead of allowing them the *habeas corpus*, he would have arrested any judge who dared to issue it, as he did at New Orleans in 1815. Now again, if this nation is to be saved, it can only be saved under the auspices of the Executive. It is the war power that must save us. In the plain and expressive language of our President, "we must keep pegging away." Blow must follow blow, harder and harder, without cessation, until the traitor-cry, "hold, enough." It is no time for treaties or armistices. Our antagonist reels with the hard hits he has received at Mobile and Atlanta, and is gasping for breath under the close hug of Grant at Petersburg. [Cheers.]

THE CHICAGO PLANS FOR PEACE.

It is just at this juncture that a cry for peace and cessation of war comes to us from Chicago. That Convention proposes to save the nation by means of an armistice and a Convention of all the States. Stop fighting, say they, and let us try talking. We have tried, for four years, to whip these rebels in, and they won't come. Now let us see if we can't coax them in.

Let us consider their plan. A change of Administration is the first thing. It is *their* party which is to bring about this glorious consummation. The next thing is an "immediate armistice;" but as their President, if elected, could not propose an armistice before the fourth of March, it will not be exactly "immediate." There must, therefore, be first of all a delay of four months before their plan can go into operation. But we will suppose this time to have elapsed, and that McClellan is in the Executive chair, what then is he to do according to the platform? He must propose an immediate armistice. And to whom? To that other President who is now in Richmond. Where *he* will be on the 4th of March, is more than I can say—but wherever he is, our President must enter into formal negotiations with him. They must negotiate as equals, with all the forms and all the courtesies of diplomatic intercourse.

Fellow citizens, *this is recognition*. The moment that our government enters into diplomatic intercourse with the Confederacy, the moment we cease to coerce the rebellious citizens and begin to deal with the political power that he has set up—the moment you send and receive ambassadors, ministers, or commissioners, from that moment you give to the rebels the character of an established government.

Year after year, Davis and his diplomatic agents have been knocking for admission at every court in Europe. The answer has been: "We can't admit you. We can't recognize you; we can't enter into commercial relations or diplomatic intercourse with you. The nation to which you owed allegiance treats you as rebels, and refuses you all diplomatic intercourse." The moment it is announced at London, or Paris, that the United States has opened diplomatic intercourse with the Confederate States, Slidell and Mason will no longer be kept out in the cold.

Now an Armistice is a temporary cessation of all hostilities on land or water. If an army is in line of battle, it must stack its arms. If it is pushing a siege, it must raise it. If a fleet is blockading a port, it must hoist anchor and depart, or if it remains on the coast, it cannot train a gun upon a single vessel. If, whilst the armistice is in force the Kearsarge should meet another Alabama, our gallant tars must fold their arms. But Davis will claim, that whilst the armistice is in force, all our armies shall be withdrawn from that indefinite territory called the Southern Confederacy. I hardly think McClellan will agree to this, and after long negotiation, Davis will probably give up the claim. How much time this preliminary negotiation will take, I cannot pretend to say. It will drag its slow length along after the fashion of diplomatic intercourse.

At last, however, the armistice is agreed upon. What next? A Convention of all the States. Not a separate convention in each State, loyal and rebel, meeting in one place. In the first place it is evident that a long time must elapse before this convention can meet. There must be time for the election of delegates and for their assembling. Several months will necessarily be consumed, for we must wait for the delegates from the Pacific side.

Let us stop at this point, for a moment, to consider what will have become of our armies. No progress from November till March, then another delay whilst the armistice is under negotiation; and finally a longer pause, until the delegates to their great Convention shall have been elected and come together. All this time our soldiers are idle. They cannot so much as be employed on military roads or fortifications, for that would be hostile work. Fellow citizens, it would be impossible to keep our armies together. They would melt away by expiration of time and desertions, and by furloughs, never to re-assemble.

Then, again, as to this Convention—where is it to meet? That is a difficult point to be settled. Perhaps it will be somewhere in Canada, if you can call that neutral territory. Then it must be a Convention of all the States, thirty-five in all. You see I count on Western Virginia, and I do so, because Western Vir-

ginia is a State of this Union, recognized by Congress and the Executive. There can be no longer any question that West Virginia is *de jure* as well as *de facto* a State. Her political *status* is irrevocably fixed. It matters not what seeming irregularities attended her admittance into the Union, for she was admitted by the very authority which had the right to say, come or keep out. We can no more agree to exclude West Virginia from the Convention of States, than we can agree to exclude Kentucky. But while we can never consent to exclude her, I very much doubt if Virginia and the other rebel States will ever agree to admit her. Upon that question the Convention would come to a dead lock in the very act of organization. No doubt there will be two sets of delegates, whose claims must be first settled—one loyal, the other rebel—from several of the States—say from Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana, and perhaps from Maryland, and even from Kentucky.

Next as to the vital question of the mode of deciding matters in this convention. The matters to be decided are at issue between the parties met together. There is no provision for an umpire, no third and disinterested party to be called in; but this convention is to settle and decide for itself. Shall each State have only one vote? Shall New York have no more voting power than Delaware? Nay, shall each State *have* one vote? Will the South ever consent to that? The loyal States are as three to one, and where it comes to a vote on the basis of members the loyal States would carry the point. No, my friends, depend upon it, these rebellious States will never consent to the decision of the majority. They would claim that the loyal and rebel States should stand each as one party, equal in dignity and voting power. In settling great national questions which concern us all, one rebel vote must count equal to three loyal votes! Nothing short of that will satisfy the South. When it comes to that what are you to expect? Everlasting debate without any result. Suppose a single branch of a single subject be under consideration—the question of slavery in the Territories. Is there a free loyal State that would vote for that claim, or a rebel State that will vote against it?

There is no occasion to enumerate the other issues which would arise, but we know quite well that the South would ask all sorts of guarantees, recognizing slavery—indemnity for their losses—assumption of their public debt, and I know not what besides.

What guaranty would they give the North? There is one we would require, and that is that hereafter there shall be no secession. This is precisely the guaranty, give them what we may, which the South will not give us.

No, fellow-citizens, this cunning platform of an armistice and a convention to save the Union, is all a delusion. Those that got it up intended to save Davis and the Confederacy, and they could have hit upon nothing more opportune, or more certain, if adopted, to accomplish that purpose. [Cheers.]

ARMISTICE, CONVENTION, AND DISUNION.

Nothing seems to be more certain than that the election of McClellan, followed by an armistice and a convention, will end the struggle and the Union together. We shall then have a peace, but it will be a peace purchased by dismemberment—a peace that destroys our nationality—a peace in which we get nothing and surrender everything—a peace which compels us to lower our flag all over the great southern region, first purchased by our treasure, and since repossessed by the precious blood of our soldiers and sailors—a peace which changes us from a great nation, feared and respected all over the world, into disjointed and crumbling elements, with new flags, new boundaries, new names and new treaties. That precious Union which was intrusted to this generation by that which has passed, is to perish in our degenerate hands, and we must straightway set to work to reconstruct our North American map. We must mark off the boundaries of the two governments, and run a line of division from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains, and perhaps to the Pacific. This line—the only one the South will agree to—must begin on the Atlantic coast, and run west by the old Mason and Dixon line to the Ohio river, along that river to the Mississippi, then up the Mississippi so as to include Missouri, and from the southwest corner of that State to the West indefinitely.

Look at your maps, and see what will be left, north and west of that line. This Southern Confederacy will have more than two-thirds of our sea coast, and all our Gulf coast. They will have the mouth of the Chesapeake, our National capital, and the control of the Mississippi.

Citizens of Newport, where will be Kentucky? Consider where that line will leave you. Loyal men of this Kentucky city, who love the old flag, this line will take away your country and carry you under a new flag—with a new allegiance—into the holy keeping of the Southern Confederacy.

As for myself, I am too old for such transplanting. They may take my pleasant home on my Kentucky hill, where I had hoped to pass what remains of life. They may take my fields, but myself, never. [Cheers.] Kentucky did not invest me with my allegiance, and she shall not take it away. I am not one of those who look upon my State as my country. Three times in the course of my life, I have removed from State to State, but I have never been sensible of a change of allegiance, but only of a change of neighborhood—always in the same old Union, and always under the same old flag. [Cheers.]

THE CRY FOR PEACE DELUSIVE.

Stand fast, then, oh, loyal men, and do your duty. Are you tired of war? Are you so smitten with the desire for peace, that you are willing to purchase it at such a price? Go to our gallant soldiers and take a lesson from them. Ask your brave boys who have left their pleasant homes to fight this great battle of liberty, if this is a time to give up. Ask them if all their comrades who have fallen in the struggle, have died in vain; if all their labors—if all their battles—if all their hard-earned victories, shall end only in loss and dishonor. Ask them if these rebels whom they have driven from field to field, are at last to reap all the fruits of victory—whether the great reward earned with so much blood, now almost within their grasp, is to be surrendered?

Ask them, finally, whether this beloved country that has been saved by their valor, that could not be destroyed by rebels in arms, is at last to be ruined by traitors at home? [Applause.]

You who live at home at ease, and yet complain of the war, go to Andersonville in Georgia, where 30,000 loyal men are held in captivity. Visit that pestilential inclosure—where to pass out is instant destruction, and to stay is worse—where triumphant death in all its terrible forms of famine, pestilence and despair reigns supreme—ask those gallant soldiers whether we shall make peace and save them, or fight on and save the nation, and the answer would be, “*fight on!*” [Cheers.]

THE PRESENT NOT THE TIME FOR CHANGE.

Now my friends, this is no time for change—no time for an armistice—no time for a convention—no time for diplomacy—no time for recognition. When this rebellion is crushed—when these rebels have grounded their arms, and have once more submitted themselves to the majesty of the laws—*then* we shall have a peace that will be permanent, and a country that will be safe for ages to come.

This great struggle has cost us thousands of men and millions of treasure, and may cost us more; but what price is too great for the preservation of our country? We call this a long war, and many are discouraged. There was a time, long past, when I too felt despondent; but now I am hopeful and confident. The very continuance of the war, with all its sufferings, has yet its preciousness. It is the last rebellion this generation will witness, and not this only, but many that are to come after us.

No, my friends, if those who rushed into secession could have seen thus far into the future—if those who gave the fatal order to open the bombardment of Sumter, could have seen the awful consequences—if some angel had shown them from some high mountain, as in a vision, the fields of blood and desolation that were to come, not a State would have passed an ordinance of secession—not a gun would have been fired.

Yes, my friends, I am hopeful. The fierceness of the storm has past. The skies begin to clear. Yet a little while, and a voice will be heard as of a shipwrecked mariner, “A sail, a sail, we are saved.” [Great applause.]

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